Report on outgoing staff
By John Ployer, VPFA

Introduction

Given the general perception that the 2017-2018 year was damaging to the UPEISU's reputation, and given the need to constantly review and learn how to make the UPEISU experience enjoyable for those involved, I decided it would be appropriate to survey the staff of UPEISU. The main goal of this survey was to learn the general feelings of SU employees, including areas which they feel the organization needs to further improve on, and to understand the SU staff perspective on more specific issues relevant to our job as executives which is to listen to the concerns of other members of the organization and to address those concerns with action when reasonable.

The Exit Survey was written for the purpose of creating a report where recommendations could be made. My recommendations are based on my own opinions after reviewing the responses. Due to the confidential nature of the survey, I summarized and generalized

written answers to the best of my abilities. Recommendations could be either specific changes, or general directions we as an executive should take.

Methods

In late May and early June of 2018, I wrote a survey to be sent out to all members of the 2017-2018 Council. This survey was written on Google Forms and circulated via our DOC, Sweta Daboo, and emailed to all 2018-2019 SU employees. The survey was made available from the first week of june until the 26th of June when I began writing this report.
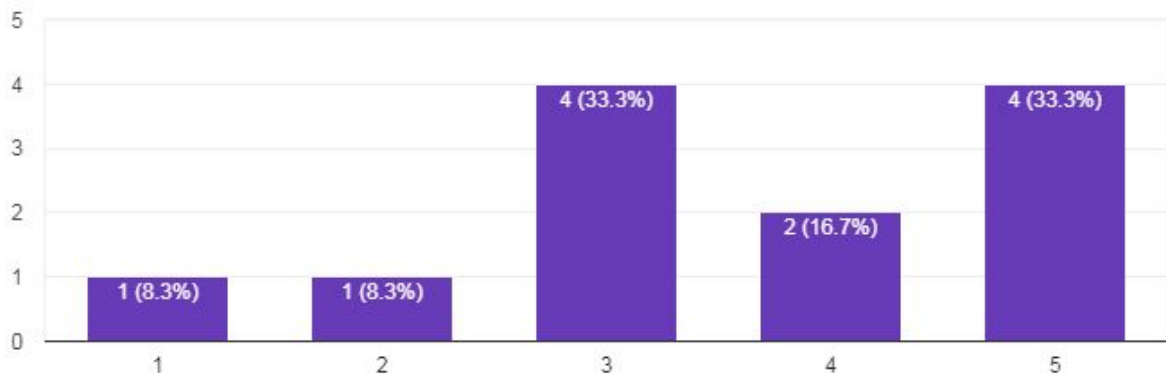
The survey itself consisted of twenty-one questions, covering a wide array of question formats and topics. Eleven of the questions were graded on a 1-5/strongly disagree-strongly agree scale, making for quick answers which gauge general feeling. Other formats used were a yes/no/maybe style, and several short and long answer questions which provided some in depth and interesting answers for us to consider.
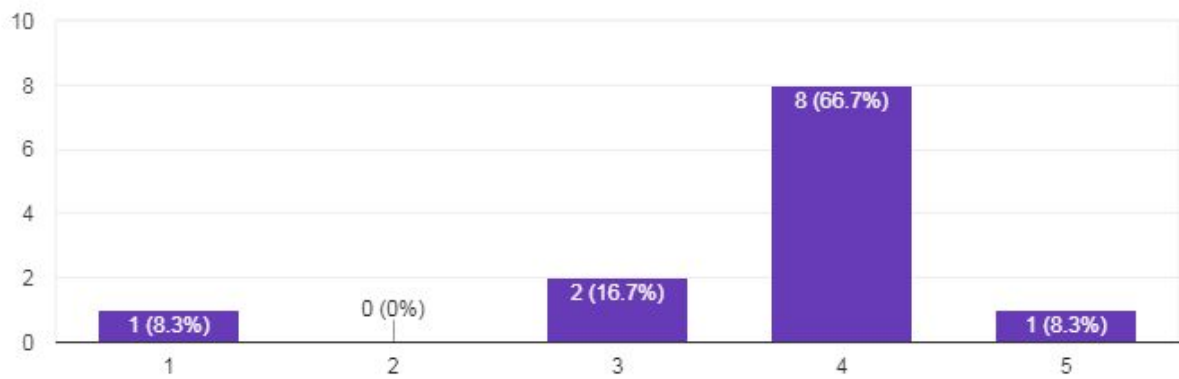
Results

Basics

The amount of work I was given was appropriate for that position.
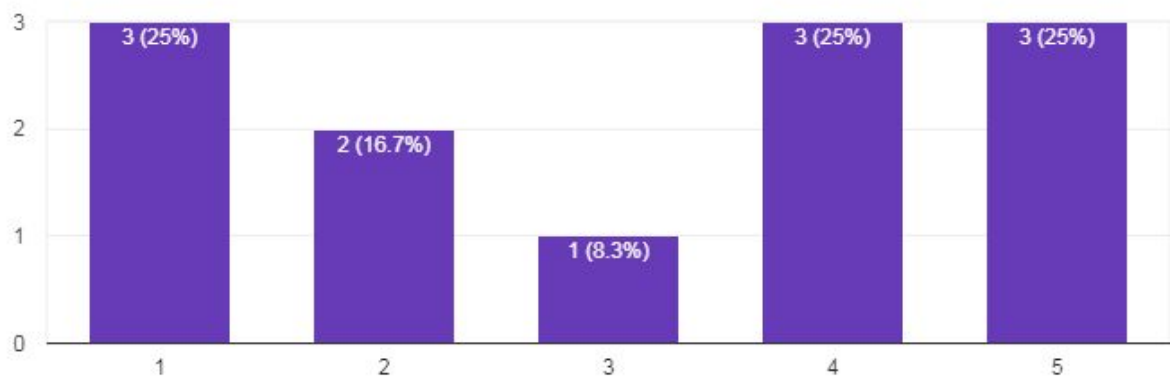
12 responses

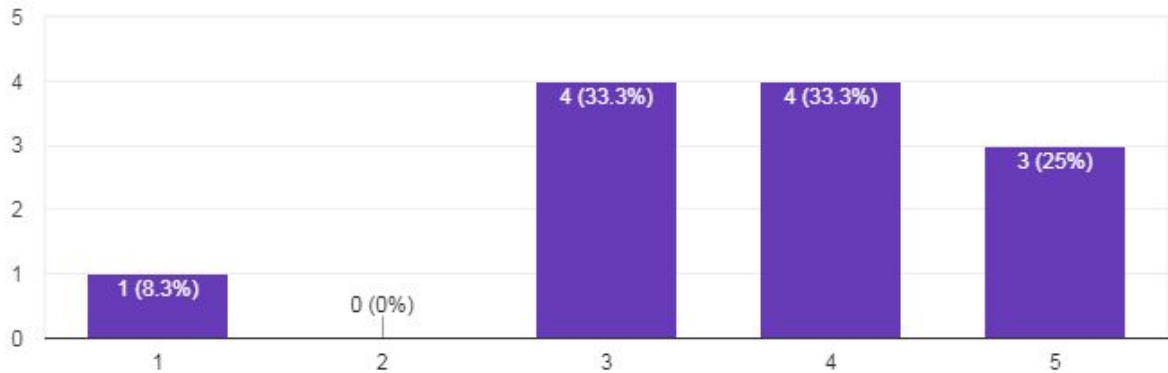## The hours worked and difficulty level of the job is what I expected.
12 responses

The pay was reasonable considering the work I preformed.
12 responses

This job provided me with experience I feel will help me in the future.
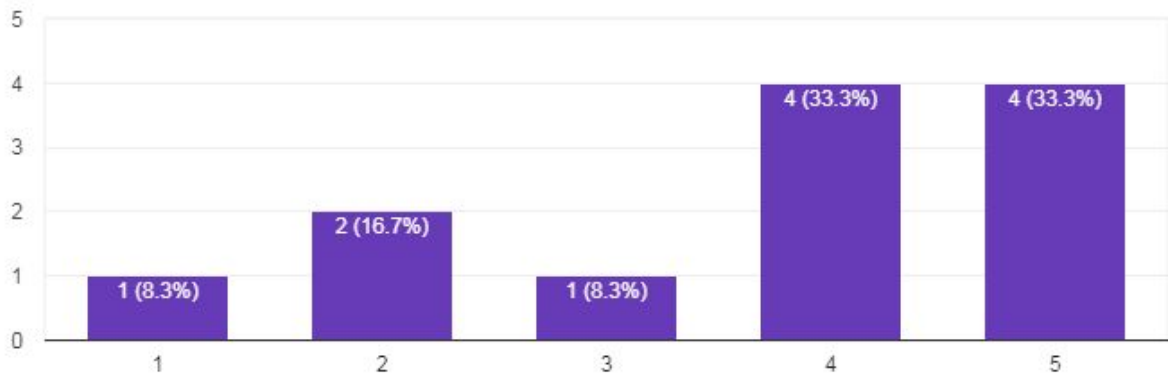
12 responses

At the end of the basics section, I asked if there was anything that future staff should know about their job beforehand which would help them succeed, perhaps something they would not expect or an "unwritten rule". All of the responses were unique and insightful, but for the sake of time I will only summarize points which stood out.

- Always be ready for your job when you get there, both physically and mentally, because you never know how busy your day may be.
- Managers and their behaviour had a huge effect on staff morale
- All employees need to perceive that they are given a fair chance for promotion, with one person saying that favouritism was a problem in the workplace
- One response did not give advice but said a better training package which addresses these unwritten rules with tips and tricks would go a long way
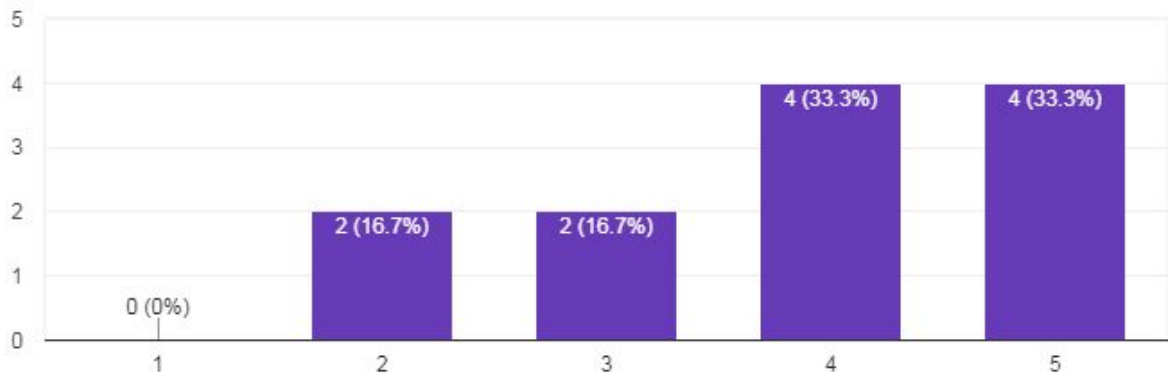
Colleagues

My coworkers made me feel safe and respected while at work.
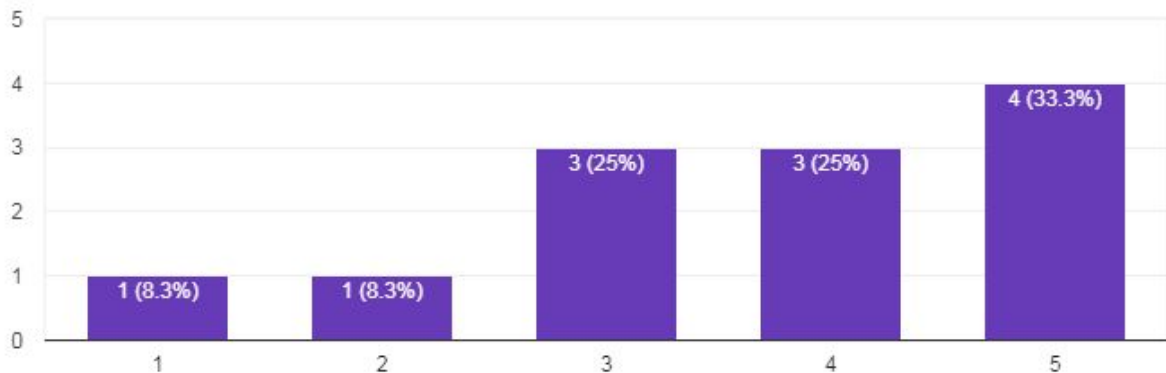
12 responses

I made friends with my coworkers while I was employed by the SU.

12 responses

Any issues had between coworkers were resolved quickly if they occurred.
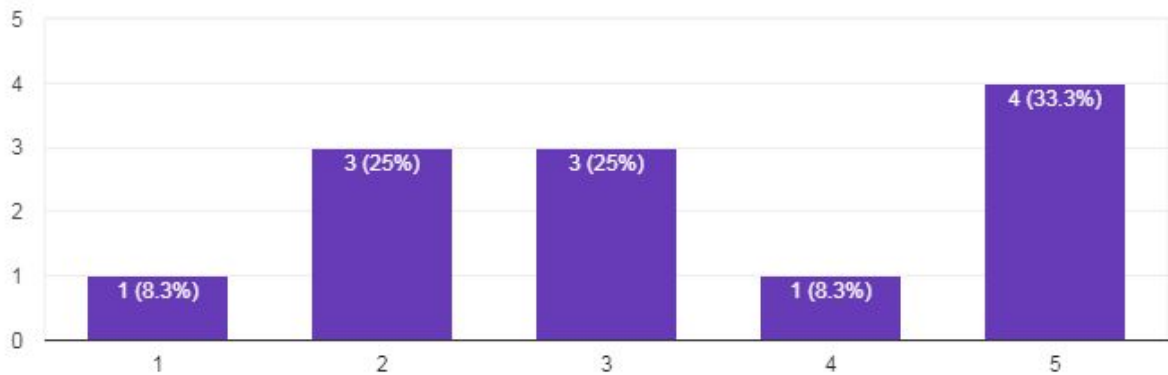
12 responses

When asked to provide information in detail about their relationship with their coworkers, it seems that staff members definitely had mixed opinions on their coworkers. By my guess the feeling of the employee seems to depend on which business they were working for. About half of the responses were positive, saying everyone got along well or actually became friends through their experience with us.

Among the half which had a negative experience with their coworkers, the reasons vary greatly but none come off as particularly surprising. Notable reasons include that perceived favouritism in the workplace caused tensions among the staff, other stress at work like deadlines caused tension and gave little time to socialize, and the fact that some employees were very enthusiastic about the job and that some were very apathetic caused quite a bit of discomfort in the workplace.
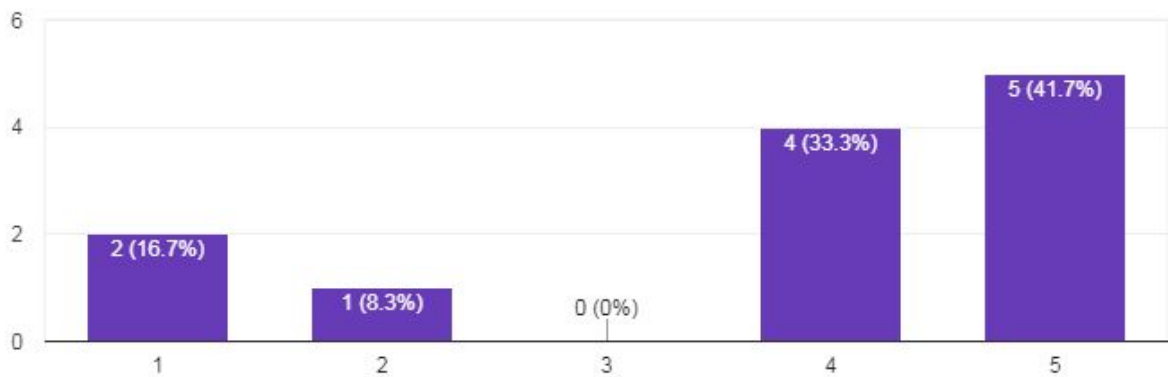
My supervisor was competent at their job.

12 responses

If there was a problem between you and your supervisor did you feel that there was another person above you that you could turn to for help.

12 responses

I was consulted about changes or decisions which affected my job, and felt listened to.

12 responses

If I had any problem I felt safe going to my supervisor for guidance.

12 responses

As we executives and full time staff are all managers in one way or another, it was important for me to address management in the survey. I asked if there was anything

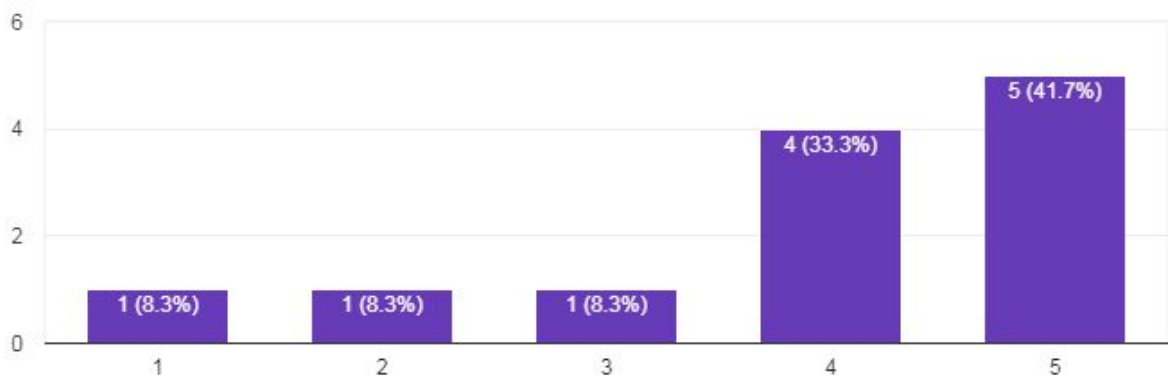about the relationship between employee and management that they felt was important to bring up. I was met with pretty negative responses.

Based on the responses I believe every SU business was represented, so that at least gives us a lot of different feedback. A common response was difficulty communicating with their manager, either because of the distance between their manager and them, or their manager was just difficult to communicate with.

Another response that more than one person had was that their manager lacked in a critical area which made both the organization less competent and made the manager lose a credibility in the eyes of the employee. This shows us that both employees and managers alike need regular assessments of their work and proper channels to improve themselves.

The overall consensus of both the employees and managers who answered this question is that the fields of communication, discipline, and feedback need to be improved. Despite all these issues several responses disclaimed their statements by saying they loved their job and still had a decent relationship with their managers.

Safety

I wanted to include a question about safety as UPEISU is commitment to taking all reasonable steps to ensure a safe workplace for all their employees, and wanted to see how well the SU met that commitment last year.

The results to the question "was the working environment safe? if not, please explain how and how it could be improved" received mixed results with several saying plainly it was safe, and others saying it was generally safe but had specific complaints. To summarize these complaints or concerns:

- Often times the height of things at work were too high and made certain tasks difficult for shorter people
- Small working spaces could be difficult at times
- Employees dealing with hot liquids need special considerations in terms of safety to prevent burns and spills
- Employee conflicts and tension in the workplace can make for a toxic work environment, making work feel like extremely unsafe for certain people

Recommendations

In this section I will recommend measure that the SU should undertake to recognize and address the results of this survey. I understand that twelve results may not define the exact feelings of all staff, especially with very diverse viewpoints, but I hope we can draw some useful conclusions which we can used to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our businesses in the 2018-2019 UPEISU year.

Basics

- Assess whether or not the pay is reasonable in each position considering the work they perform, maybe consider editing the pay rates for certain positions for the next budget if reasonable
- Ensure that workplace fairness is practiced to the maximum degree

Colleagues

- Work to maintain enthusiasm and cohesion within the team. I recommend continuous efforts throughout the year to build the team and break down barriers

Management

- Managers need to regularly review their employees, identify weakness areas, and think about ways to address weak areas
- Managers need to dictate their thoughts clearly to the staff, and give constant verbal feedback in order to make sure staff are on the right take and feel like they're on the right track
- All SU staff need to be aware of the different communication styles, and when to use which one
- Managers need to remain positive and be aware the they set the attitude of the team

- Things which are safe to you may not feel safe for other people
- Safety concerns of staff to be encouraged and listened to in a timely manner
- Specific safety requirements of different types of people need to be identified early and address early

Conclusion

To conclude, based on the results of the 1-5 scale questions, staff of the 2017-2018 SU year were generally satisfied with their treatment and experience, though certain individuals had a subpar experience due to a wide variety of reasons.

I believe that the staff experience here is a positive one for most, but the results depend on the capabilities of the manager and the cohesiveness of the team, which sometimes varies from year to year. In my recommendations I laid out that ongoing communication and team bonding will be important factors to creating amicable staff relations. If this is done, along with continuous feedback, I believe issues like power struggles in the workplace and unaddressed safety concerns will not occur this year coming as some staff claimed it had this past year.

As managers I hope we all take there recommendations and the results to heart, and ensure we provide the best experience possible for our staff, while maximizing the productivity of our businesses.